

Agency Activity Inventory by Agency

Appropriation Period: 2003-05 Activity Version: 2004 Sup w/ Alloc & Activities

Agency: 215 - Utilities and Transportation Comm

Administration

This core activity provides executive, administrative, financial, and human resource services to the commission.

Statewide Result Area: Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information and energy

Category: Provide consumer protection

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$829,000	\$0	\$829,000	8.9	\$835,000	\$0	\$835,000	8.9

Expected Results:

Advance the implementation the commission's strategic plan while maximizing the use of agency resources.

Agency Commissioners

The commission is both a quasi-judicial and quasi-legislative state agency. It is the responsibility of the three commissioners to regulate privately-owned utility and transportation businesses so that services are fairly priced, available, reliable, and safe. Matters brought before the commission include changes to company rates; terms or conditions for service (tariff revisions); requests by companies for authority to take action, such as transfer property, issue securities, or change accounting practices; and notices of inquiry and rule makings. Issues involving substantial disagreements or those requiring further fact-finding become formal, adjudicated legal proceedings under the Administrative Procedures Act. The commission also advocates formally and informally before federal bodies.

Statewide Result Area: Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information and energy

Category: Provide consumer protection

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$787,000	\$0	\$787,000	7.4	\$794,000	\$0	\$794,000	7.4

Expected Results:

Services of regulated industries are fairly priced, available, reliable and safe.

Pipeline Safety

Safety regulation of natural gas and hazardous liquids pipelines involves ensuring that pipeline companies operating in Washington construct and operate their pipelines in accord with state and federal statute and regulation. Staff conducts inspections of pipelines; conducts audits of company practices; investigates pipeline accidents; and reviews the design and construction of new pipelines. The commission has the primary responsibility within the state to develop, explain, and enforce pipeline rules and policies to protect Washington citizens and encourage the safe movement of these products. The commission works closely with local governments, community organizations, the first responder community, and citizens to ensure they are informed of pipeline issues in their communities. Washington is one of nine states granted inspection authority over interstate pipelines.

Statewide Result Area: Improve the safety of people and property

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Category: Prevent accidents and prepare for emergencies

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$2,313,000	\$0	\$2,313,000	20.8	\$2,259,000	\$0	\$2,259,000	20.8

Expected Results:

Outcome/Output Measures: 1. Reported gas and hazardous liquids incidents per hundred miles of pipe. 2. Value of property damage caused by gas and hazardous liquids pipeline incidents. 3. Number of public inquiries about pipeline safety. 4. Percentage of inspections completed from our annual federal work plan.

Outcome Measure: Reported natural gas and hazardous liquid incidents per 100 miles of pipeline in Washington.

1999-01		2001-03		2003-05	
FY00 Actual	FY01 Actual	FY02 Actual	FY03 Estimate	FY04 Proposed	FY05 Proposed
0	0	0	0	0	0

Statewide results: 8. Improve the safety of people and property

Public Counsel

The Public Counsel Section of the Office of the Attorney General is responsible for representing the interests of residential and small commercial customers in utility proceedings before the Utilities and Transportation Commission and state courts.

Statewide Result Area: Improve the economic vitality of businesses and individuals

Category: Provide consumer protection

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$792,000	\$0	\$792,000	0.0	\$811,000	\$0	\$811,000	0.0

Expected Results:

Success in developing formal positions in specific rate cases that best represent the broad interests of ratepayers in fair, just, and reasonable rates, and adequate and reliable service.

Railroad Safety

Railroad Safety involves commission activities in three areas: engineering, enforcement, and education. Activities include inspections of hazardous materials handling, track, operating practices, signals, and clearance; investigations of trespassing, crossing, and derailment incidents; participation in Operation Lifesaver, a national effort to inform the public about rail safety issues; and primary responsibility within the state to develop, explain, and enforce rail safety rules and policies to protect Washington citizens. Commission inspectors work with local road authorities, the Washington State Department of Transportation, railroad companies, and the public to ensure that railroad/highway crossings and other rail-related structures are built, maintained, altered, and closed in the safest manner possible. A major emphasis of Railroad Safety is mitigating this particular hazard.

Statewide Result Area: Improve the safety of people and property

Category: Prevent accidents and prepare for emergencies

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FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$1,185,000	\$0	\$1,185,000	14.0	\$1,471,000	\$0	\$1,471,000	14.0

Expected Results:

Outcome/Output measures: The number of grade crossing and trespass collisions per million train miles.

Outcome Measure: The number of grade crossing and trespass collisions per million train miles in Washington.

1999-01		2001-03		2003-05	
FY00 Actual	FY01 Actual	FY02 Actual	FY03 Estimate	FY04 Proposed	FY05 Proposed
0	0	0	0	0	0

Statewide results: 8. Improve the safety of people and property

Regulation of Consumer Services

This activity supports the commission's consumer protection mission by ensuring that regulated companies treat Washington State consumers appropriately, fairly, and consistently. The commission's Consumer Affairs Section works directly with consumers who contact the commission regarding business disputes with regulated companies. Activities include mediating disputes between consumers and regulated companies; responding to consumers' questions about service, consumer rights and responsibilities, and issues before the commission; providing technical assistance to companies to help them improve service delivery and reduce complaint levels; evaluating company service levels, operating practices, and existing rules; analyzing complaint data for consumer fraud, deception, or abuse; conducting formal investigations into companies that appear to be using unfair, misleading, or deceptive business practices; making recommendations to the commission on needed compliance actions or improvements; and monitoring companies after formal action to ensure the commission's directives are met.

Statewide Result Area: Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information and energy

Category: Provide consumer protection

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$1,774,000	\$0	\$1,774,000	21.0	\$1,683,000	\$0	\$1,683,000	21.0

Expected Results:

Outcome/Output measures: 1. The frequency of electricity complaints per 10,000 customers. 2. The frequency of natural gas complaints per 10,000 customers. 3. The percentage of customers who indicated they had positive interactions with the Consumer Affairs staff regarding their complaint. 4. the telephone service quality complaints per 100,000 access lines.

Outcome Measure: Telecommunications service quality complaints per 100,000 access lines: U S West.*

1999-01		2001-03		2003-05	
FY00 Actual	FY01 Actual	FY02 Actual	FY03 Estimate	FY04 Proposed	FY05 Proposed
0	0	0	0	0	0

Statewide results: 7. Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information and energy.

Service quality complaints have been driven by the industry's largest carrier, U S West, which is therefore shown separately.

Outcome Measure: Telecommunications service quality complaints per 100,000 access lines: Other local exchange companies (other than U S West).

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1999-01		2001-03		2003-05	
FY00 Actual	FY01 Actual	FY02 Actual	FY03 Estimate	FY04 Proposed	FY05 Proposed
0	0	0	0	0	0

Statewide results: 7. Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information and energy.

Regulation of Energy Companies

Regulation of energy companies involves overseeing the rates and business practices of the state's investor-owned natural gas and electric distribution companies doing business in Washington State. The commission has the primary responsibility within the state to develop, explain, and enforce electric and natural gas rules and policies to protect consumers, encourage investment, and ensure adequate energy supplies. The commission also reviews tariff changes and contracts of regulated energy companies; provides leadership on policy and operational issues within the energy industry; works with other energy agencies; and assists in crafting solutions to regional problems. The staff presents expert testimony in major contested cases before the commission, including rate increase requests, corporate mergers, prudence reviews, and cost of service studies.

Statewide Result Area: Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information and energy

Category: Enhance systems that provide access to information and energy

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$1,889,000	\$0	\$1,889,000	20.8	\$1,903,000	\$0	\$1,903,000	20.8

Expected Results:

Outcome/Output measures: 1. The number of companies that established and reported reliability standards. 2. Measures of system-wide reliability.

Regulation of Water Companies

Regulation of water companies involves overseeing the rates and business practices of the regulated water companies doing business in Washington State. The commission works with privately-owned water companies and their customers to set fair rates for drinking water, and protects captive water customers from the potential abuse of the water companies. The commission has the primary responsibility within the state to develop, explain, and enforce water rules and policies to protect consumers and encourage investment. The commission also reviews tariff changes of regulated water companies; works with water companies and the Department of Health's Drinking Water Program to resolve service complaints; and addresses water quality and quantity issues that arise during a rate case.

Statewide Result Area: Improve the economic vitality of businesses and individuals

Category: Provide consumer protection

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$254,000	\$0	\$254,000	3.0	\$255,000	\$0	\$255,000	3.0

Expected Results:

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Rates are fair, just, and reasonable for customers and sufficient to allow the regulated company an opportunity to earn a reasonable return on its investment and to maintain financial viability. Cases are processed within statutory time constraints. Customers understand the cost drivers underlying the rates they are charged. Periodic reports are made on time with follow-up on companies out of compliance. Complaints regarding quality or quantity of water are resolved in conjunction with Department of Health, and findings are reported to the customer and regulated company.

Solid Waste Companies Licensing, Regulation and Safety

Regulation of solid waste companies involves overseeing the rates, service areas, safety and business practices of regulated collection companies doing business in Washington State. This includes rulemaking, setting fair rates for the collection of residential and commercial garbage and residential recyclables, resolving related billing and service problems, and auditing and enforcement. The commission works with counties and cities to develop comprehensive solid waste management plans; with collection companies to implement the plans and provide required services; and with the Department of Ecology on recycling and the State Solid Waste Management Plan.

Statewide Result Area: Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information and energy

Category: Provide consumer protection

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$1,055,000	\$0	\$1,055,000	11.9	\$1,061,000	\$0	\$1,061,000	11.9

Expected Results:

Rates are fair, just, and reasonable for customers and sufficient to allow the regulated company an opportunity to earn a reasonable return on its investment and to maintain financial viability. Cases are processed within statutory time constraints. Periodic reports are made on time with follow-up on companies out of compliance. Recycling rates and programs are in compliance with the solid waste plans of the applicable county. Solid waste plans are reviewed and cost information supplied to the county in a timely manner.

Telecommunication Companies Licensing and Regulation

Regulation of telecommunications companies involves overseeing the rates and practices of regulated telecommunications companies doing business in Washington State. The commission has the primary responsibility within the state to develop, explain, and enforce telecommunications rules and policies to protect consumers, promote competition, and encourage investment and innovation. The commission reviews tariff and price list changes, contracts, and interconnection agreements of telecommunications companies; monitors the financial performance of approximately 20 companies that continue to have a captive customer base; provides leadership on policy and operational issues within the telecommunications industry; and works closely with all segments of the telecommunications industry, including other government agencies and unregulated carriers such as wireless companies and Internet providers. The staff presents expert testimony in major contested cases before the agency, and also helps telecommunications competitors resolve their disputes informally and, when necessary, participates in formal arbitration and enforcement cases.

Statewide Result Area: Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information and energy

Category: Enhance systems that provide access to information and energy

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$2,363,000	\$0	\$2,363,000	24.2	\$2,629,000	\$0	\$2,629,000	24.7

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Expected Results:

Outcome/Output measures: 1. Percentage of households with telephone service. 2. Measure of competition in telephone industry.

Outcome Measure: Percentage of Washington households with telephone service.*

1999-01		2001-03		2003-05	
FY00 Actual	FY01 Actual	FY02 Actual	FY03 Estimate	FY04 Proposed	FY05 Proposed
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*Statewide results: 6. Improve the economic vitality of businesses and individuals.
Washington ranks above the national average, which was 94.2% in 1995.*

Outcome Measure: Concentration Index for the local telephone market.*

1999-01		2001-03		2003-05	
FY00 Actual	FY01 Actual	FY02 Actual	FY03 Estimate	FY04 Proposed	FY05 Proposed
0	0	0	0	0	0

*Statewide results: 6. Improve the economic vitality of businesses and individuals.
Lower concentration index equals more competition; a concentration index of 10,000 indicates a monopoly exists.*

Transportation Companies Licensing, Regulation and Safety

Regulation of transportation companies involves overseeing the rates, routes, services, and practices of regulated bus, household goods, airporter, pipeline, low-level radioactive waste disposal, and commercial ferry companies.

Statewide Result Area: Improve the safety of people and property

Category: Prevent accidents and prepare for emergencies

FY 2004				FY 2005			
Total	GFS	Other	FTEs	Total	GFS	Other	FTEs
\$2,011,000	\$0	\$2,011,000	23.1	\$1,825,000	\$0	\$1,825,000	22.6

Expected Results:

Outcome/Output measures: 1. The number of bus accidents per million miles traveled. 2. The number of carrier profiles requested. 3. The percentage of bus companies with a current compliance review. 4. The percentage of bus companies re-inspected within four months of receiving a conditional safety rating.